CLAIMS

1. A digital pen (1), comprising a writing instrument for use by a user to create penstrokes (2)

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and including means for recording the penstrokes as penstroke data

and means for uploading the penstroke data to a computer;

10   characterised in that the pen is used in association with a plurality of identity tags (20, 36),

each tag being fixed at a location at which penstroke data are to be recorded,

15   and the identity of each tag being stored in association with its location;

and in that there is provided identity tag reading means (3, 4) associated with the pen for reading the identity of each identity tag,

20   together with means for associating the identity read from each said identity tag with the penstroke data recorded at its associated location.

2. A digital pen according to claim 1, characterised in that the identity tag reading means (3, 4) is integral with the pen.

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3. A digital pen according to claim 1, characterised in that means are provided for associating at least a first tag identity with specified conditions,

such that penstroke data are associated with the first tag identity only where the

30   penstroke data are recorded and the first tag identity is read by the identity tag reading means in accordance with the specified conditions.

4. A digital pen according to claim 3, characterised in that there is provided at least one personal identification tag, the identity of the personal identification tag being stored in association with the identity of the user,

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and the conditions specify that at least one personal identification tag must be read by the identity tag reading means in association with the recorded penstroke data.

5. A digital pen according to claim 3, characterised in that indicating means (5, 6)

10   are provided for indicating to the user whether or not the specified conditions have been satisfied.

6. A digital pen according to claim 3 or claim 4, characterised in that the conditions specify a maximum time period which may elapse between reading the

15   first tag and/or the personal identification tag and recording the associated penstroke data.

7. A digital pen according to any of claims 1 – 5, characterised in that means are provided for recording in association with the penstroke data the time and date at

20   which the data were recorded or uploaded.

8. A digital pen according to any of claims 1 – 5, characterised in that the identity tag reading means (4) comprises contact identity tag reading means for reading the identity of an identity tag (20) by physically contacting the tag.

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9. A digital pen according to any of claims 1 – 5, characterised in that the identity tag reading means (3) comprises a barcode reader.

10. A method of recording penstroke data by means of a digital pen (1), wherein a

30   plurality of identity tags (20, 36) are affixed, each to a location at which penstroke

data are to be recorded, and the location of each identity tag is recorded in association with its tag identity in a database;

the method comprising the steps of

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(a) reading the tag identity of a first said identity tag by means of an identity tag reader (3, 4) associated with the digital pen;

(b) using the digital pen to record penstroke data relating to the location of the

10   first identity tag; and

(c) processing and storing the penstroke data in association with the first tag identity.

15   11. A method according to claim 10, characterised by the additional step of

(d1) after step (a), measuring a predetermined elapsed time period,

wherein step (c) is completed only where step (b) is initiated within the

20   predetermined elapsed time period.

12. A method according to claim 10, characterised by the additional step of

(d2) after step (a), measuring a predetermined elapsed time period,

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wherein at step (c) only penstroke data recorded at step (b) within the predetermined elapsed time period are processed and stored in association with the first tag identity.

30   13. A method according to any of claims 10, 11 or 12, characterised by the additional steps of

(e) providing a personal identification tag to the user of the pen;

(f) recording the identity of the personal identification tag in association with the
5   identity of the user in a database;

(g) reading the identity of the personal identification tag with the identity tag
reader, and

10   (h) at step (c), processing and storing the penstroke data in association with the
identity of the personal identification tag.